

Appl. No. 10/748,315
Amdt. Dated: Dec. 1, 2005
Reply to Office Action of June 30, 2005

REMARKS

Claims 1-9, and 11-17 are remained unchanged from the response filed Sep. 29, 2005. Claim 10 is amended. Support for the change to claim 10 can be found e.g., in claim 15, as originally filed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §102

Claims 1 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C 102(b) as being anticipated by US 6,283,602B1 (Kawaguchi et al).

In response to the rejection to claims 1 and 15 under 35 U.S.C 102(b) as being anticipated by US 6,283,602B1 (Kawaguchi et al), Applicant hereby traverses the rejection and submits that claims 1 and 15 are allowable in their current form:

Claim 1, as originally filed, recites in part:

a micro-lens, ... for collimating divergent rays emitted from
the point light source into parallel rays...

Similarly, claim 15, as originally filed, recites in part:

a micro-lens, ... for collimating divergent rays emitted from

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the point light source into non-divergent rays...

Applicant submits that such a surface lighting device as set forth in claims 1 and 15 is neither taught, disclosed, nor suggested by Kawaguchi '602 or any of the other cited references, taken alone or in combination.

Applicant acknowledges that Kawaguchi discloses a lighting device including a light guide 101, a point light source 102 and lenses 103. However, Kawaguchi '602 expressly teaches that the light emitted from the point-source lights 102 is diverged by lenses 103 (column 1, lines 29 and 30).

The lenses 103 as disclosed by Kawaguchi '602B1 are concave lenses as shown in FIG. 10 and are thus designed to divert or diverge light away from a centerline of lens, thus making the light rays less parallel or collimated (column 1, lines 29 and 30).

Further, the principal of operation of Kawaguchi '602 is reliant upon the light divergence of the prior art device lenses 103 as a means of promoting even lighting of the light guide 101. Thus, based on MPEP §2143.01, modifying Kawaguchi '602 (prior art device) to replace the diverging lenses with converging ones would not have been obvious

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because such a change would represent a change in the principle of operation of that device and would probably adversely affect the original intent of that device.

Therefore the present surface lighting device of claims 1 and 15, as currently presented, should not be considered as being anticipated by Kawaguchi nor as being rendered obvious thereby, whether taken alone or in combination with any of the other cited references.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1 and 15 are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §103

Responsive to the rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 6,283,602B1 (Kawaguchi et al), Applicant traverses this rejection as follows.

Claim 10, as amended, recites in part:

...the light beams emitted from the point light sources are
rendered non-divergent by the micro-lenses and ...

Applicant submits that such a liquid crystal display device as set forth in

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claim 10 is neither taught, disclosed, nor suggested by Kawaguchi '602 or any of the other cited references, taken alone or in combination.

Applicant acknowledges that Kawaguchi discloses that a lighting device (4) arranged under the liquid crystal panel (2). However, Kawaguchi does not disclose or suggest that "the light beams emitted from the point light sources are rendered non-divergent by the micro-lenses".

The setup of Kawaguchi, as such, is not at all like the present liquid crystal display device, as set forth in claim 10, in which the liquid crystal display device is configured such that the divergent lights emitted by the point light sources are converged by the micro-lenses and coupled into the light guide plate. With respect to the optical transmitting path, the present surface lighting device and the present liquid crystal display device using the same, as presented in claim 10, as amended, are different from Kawaguchi's invention. Therefore the present liquid crystal display device of claim 10, as amended, should not be considered as being anticipated by Kawaguchi nor as being rendered obvious thereby.

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Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 10 are respectfully requested. Claims 2 and 9 depend from claim 1 and 8, respectively, and therefore should also be allowable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §103

Claims 2-7, 11-14, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 6,283,602B1 (Kawaguchi et al) as applied to claims 1, 10 and 15 above, and further in view of US 5,745,519 (Ruda et al).

Claims 2 and 4-7 depend from claim 1, and therefore should also be allowable.

Claim 3 depends from claim 2, and therefore should also be allowable.

Claims 8 and 9 depend from claim 7, and therefore should also be allowable.

Claims 11, 12 and 14 depend from claim 10, and therefore should also be allowable.

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Claim 13 depends from claim 12, and therefore should also be allowable.

Claim 16 depends from claim 15, and therefore should also be allowable.

Claim 17 depends from claim 16, and therefore should also be allowable.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an action to such effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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